UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

Distr.
LIMITED

A/AC.105/C.1/WG.6/L.7
3 March 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF
OUTER SPACE
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee
Twenty-ninth session
Working Group of the Whole

DRAFT REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP OF THE WHOLE TO EVALUATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE EXPLORATION AND PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE ON THE WORK OF ITS SIXTH SESSION

1. The Working Group of the Whole to Evaluate the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82) was re-established for its sixth session by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in accordance with paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 46/45 of 9 December 1991, with a view to improving the execution of activities relating to international cooperation, particularly those included in the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, and to proposing concrete steps to increase such cooperation as well as to make it more efficient. The Working Group held a series of meetings from 27 February to 4 March 1992, during the twenty-ninth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. At its meeting on 4 March 1992, the Working Group adopted the present report.

2. Mr. Muhammed Nasim Shah (Pakistan) was elected Chairman of the Working Group. The Chairman, in his opening statement, reviewed the mandate of the Working Group for its sixth session and the status of the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82.

3. In accordance with paragraph 9 of resolution 46/45, the Working Group of the Whole undertook a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82. While doing so, the Working Group had before it a background paper prepared by the Secretariat (A/AC.105/504), as well as a number of studies and reports prepared by Member States and international organizations. The Working Group noted that 1992 was the tenth anniversary of UNISPACE 82.

4. The Working Group noted with satisfaction the valuable efforts of the United Nations, Member States and other relevant international organizations to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE 82.

5. Bearing in mind that a number of the recommendations are yet to be implemented, the Working Group recommended that the following should be undertaken, keeping in view the priorities contained in paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 46/45.

I. SHORT-TERM TRAINING AND LONG-TERM EDUCATION

6. Seminars and workshops should continue to be organized regularly on advanced applications of space science and technology and on new systems developments. At the same time, the recent evolution of the related technologies, applications and developmental priorities should be taken into account for the benefit of the planners, administrators and users in the developing countries. Member States, particularly the developed countries, and international organizations are requested to support the training programme on an ongoing basis.

7. The emphasis of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications should remain on long-term, project-oriented on-the-job training in space technology itself as well as its specific applications areas, in particular new developments in satellite systems, software for remote sensing and use of digital processing systems and training for management of ground stations. In order to facilitate the development by the developing countries of their indigenous research-and-development capabilities, the number of trainees from each country should be sufficient to create a national core group of experts. The Working Group noted with appreciation the offers of fellowships made by some Member States and international organizations in that regard and urged other Member States and international organizations to make similar contributions. Keeping in view that the UNISPACE 82 recommendations envisaged at least 100 fellowships to be organized by the United Nations annually for in-depth, long-term exposure to space technology and applications, the Outer Space Affairs Division should make every effort to arrange for the increase in number of fellowships and to encourage full utilization of the fellowships.

8. Member States are urged to introduce or to improve space-related materials in the curricula of their existing universities at both undergraduate and graduate levels to promote education in space science, technology and applications.

II. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

9. The Working Group noted with appreciation the efforts being made by the United Nations in connection with the creation of centres for space science and technology education at the regional level, possibly linked to the institutions implementing space programmes in the developing countries. The Working Group also noted that the documents had been distributed to the Member

States in this regard, giving details of the establishment of the centres. Bearing in mind the recommendations of UNISPACE 82, the United Nations should continue making efforts to arrange funding and other support from the developed countries as well as from international organizations for this purpose.

10. In the light of the continued development and evolution of space activities, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should request all States, particularly those with major space or space-related capabilities, to continue to inform the Secretary-General annually, as appropriate, about those space activities that were or could be the subject of greater international cooperation, with particular emphasis on the needs of the developing countries, in order to permit a better assessment of the present and future of such international cooperation by the Working Group at its next session.

11. Similarly, the Committee should also request international organizations with space-related activities to continue to inform the Secretary-General annually concerning those space activities that were or could be the subject of greater international cooperation, with particular emphasis on the needs of the developing countries, in order to permit a better assessment of the present and future of such international cooperation by the Working Group at its next session.

12. Extensive cooperation should be encouraged among countries within a region through sharing their human resources, technical expertise, hardware and software for space-related projects. If a country or countries within the region find it beyond their resources to undertake a programme by themselves, the United Nations should, upon request, endeavour to coordinate with them towards establishing a regional programme addressing the needs of those countries.

13. Encouragement should be given to governmental as well as non-governmental organizations which, by means of conferences, publications and other activities, including the holding of symposia and meetings devoted to special topics, could help integrate regional and interregional efforts in order to facilitate and coordinate the space activities or scientific organizations. The United Nations should strengthen its cooperation with them, as part of its commitment to assisting developing countries to attain the benefits of space technology including its spin-offs. Efforts should also be made by the United Nations to seek the cooperation of other international and regional bodies specialized in space activities.

14. Countries with relevant capabilities are once again encouraged to provide to the developing countries financial and technical assistance for developing low-cost community receivers for communication satellites and low-cost, preferably renewable, power sources to operate the systems in un-electrified locations.

15. The Working Group noted with appreciation the reports prepared by the Outer Space Affairs Division on the resources and technological capabilities of the States in the fields of space activities as well as in the areas of education, training, research and fellowship opportunities for the promotion of cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. Those reports should be periodically updated by the Outer Space Affairs Division.

16. Given the investments already made on the ground by many countries in the form of ground stations, processing equipment, data banks, software, etc., for remote sensing data reception/analyses, satellite-operating States are urged to ensure the availability of data on a continued basis and in a form compatible with the current systems.

III. INFORMATION, STUDIES AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY SERVICES

17. Noting that some of the space applications studies recommended by UNISPACE 82 were incomplete and that some of them were limited in scope, the Working Group recommended that, based upon the studies completed so far, a few more specific studies should be carried out to demonstrate the potentials of space technology; these studies might include the following:

(i) Use of low-Earth orbiting satellites for communications;

(ii) Remote and rural area communications and broadcasting;

(iii) Forest resources management;

(iv) Ocean resources development.

18. In order to promote better access to and experiences in higher education in space-related subjects, the United Nations should, upon request, continue to arrange for the provision of consultancy in the form of experts from the developed and developing countries in the preparation of an integrated national plan of action for initiating, strengthening or reorienting an appropriate space applications programme which should be in conformity with other national development programmes. The Working Group noted with appreciation the efforts of the Outer Space Affairs Division in the preparation of a list of experts in space technology and applications, on the basis of information provided by Member States and their national space authorities, to facilitate the exchange of consultants at the international level. This list should be periodically updated and circulated to the Member States.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

19. In concluding its comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82, the Working Group of the Whole noted that efforts in the following areas have to be particularly intensified:

(a) Stimulation of the growth of indigenous nuclei and an autonomous technological base in space technology in developing countries. UNISPACE 82 had recommended the free exchange of scientific and technological information and an arrangement for the transfer of technologies to promote the use and development of space technology in the developing countries. The Conference had also recommended the removal of undue restrictions on the sale of components, systems/subsystems required for space applications. A greater international understanding therefore needs to be evolved to overcome the difficulties faced by the developing countries in this respect;

(b) Promotion of greater exchange of actual experiences with space applications. UNISPACE 82 had recommended appropriate assistance and particularly had called upon international financial agencies to support demonstration projects to provide opportunities for gaining hands-on experience in space technology applications for the developing nations through their direct involvement in such applications projects or pilot projects;

(c) Funding support:

(i) The Working Group regretfully noted that the budgetary allocations for the space applications programme for implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82 have been meagre and inadequate in the past years and expressed its deep concern that the situation remains the same for the current year as well. In order to fully implement the recommendations of UNISPACE 82, the Working Group recommends that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space request the General Assembly of the United Nations to make a substantial increase in the budget allocation for the space applications programme;

(ii) In formulating cooperative programmes and projects, the intensive participation of international and regional financial and development institutions should be encouraged by the United Nations. In this connection, the Secretariat should continue to prepare annually a report on the arrangements it has made with other organs, bodies and organizations of the United Nations system and other regional/international organizations in order to utilize fully the available resources and to secure additional financial support from other sources for continued implementation of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications.

20. International Space Year has stimulated the organization of several technical meetings, workshops, demonstrations and cooperative projects which have wider relevance, particularly in the areas of the protection of the Earth's environment and public education. It would be of great value to increase the participation of individuals from the developing countries in these forums, particularly in view of the financial constraints being faced by them. It would therefore be essential to encourage the maximum possible

availability of support for travel and other assistance from various international and other sponsoring bodies for the participants from the developing countries.

21. The Working Group recommended that it be reconvened next year to continue its work.